

Lincoln

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ADDRESS

ON THE

LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

ABRAHAM LINCOLN,

BY THE

HON. RICHARD S. FIELD.

DELIVERED BEFORE THE LEGISLATURE OF NEW JERSEY,
FEBRUARY 12, 1866.

TRENTON, N. J.:

PRINTED AT THE "STATE GAZETTE" OFFICE.
1866.

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RESOLUTIONS

IN MEMORY OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN, INTRODUCED BY HON.
D^SWITT CLINTON MORRIS, OF HUDSON COUNTY, AND
ADOPTED JANUARY 17, 1866, BY THE LEGIS-
LATURE OF THE STATE OF
NEW JERSEY.

Resolved, By the Assembly (the Senate concurring), that we deeply mourn the violent death of Abraham Lincoln, late President of the United States, and in order to testify our respect and mingle our tears with the people for the nation's loss.

Resolved, That the Senate and Assembly will meet in the Assembly room on Monday, the 12th of February, (that being his birth day) at eight o'clock P. M., and that the Hon. R. S. Field be invited to deliver an address upon the life and character of Abraham Lincoln, late President of the United States.

Resolved, That a committee of three from the House, together with a like number from the Senate, be appointed to make all proper arrangements for this purpose.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Hon. George T. Cobb, Hon. James M. Scovel, Hon. Joshua Doughty, from the Senate, and Hon. DeWitt Clinton Morris, Hon. George W. N. Custis, Hon. Edward L. Price, from the Assembly, were appointed a Joint Committee in accordance with the foregoing resolutions, and the following correspondence took place :

TRENTON, January 25th, 1866.

HON. R. S. FIELD—DEAR SIR: We take pleasure in herewith enclosing the joint resolutions inviting you to deliver an address upon the life and character of our late lamented President, Abraham Lincoln, on the twelfth of February next, at 8 o'clock P. M., in the Assembly Chamber. May we ask the favor of your acceptance and reply.

With great respect,

GEORGE T. COBB,

Chairman of Senate Committee.

DEWITT CLINTON MORRIS,

Chairman of Assembly Committee.

PRINCETON, February 1, 1866.

GENTLEMEN: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 28th ult., enclosing a copy of the joint resolutions of the Senate and House of Assembly, inviting me to deliver an address upon the life and character

of our late lamented President, Abraham Lincoln, on the twelfth of February next, at 8 o'clock P. M., in the Assembly Chamber.

Sympathizing as I do with the resolutions of the Senate and Assembly, and desirous of testifying my respect for the memory of one whom I loved while living, and whose death I deeply deplore, it will give me pleasure to comply with the invitation which you have addressed to me.

R. S. FIELD.

Very respectfully,

Hon. GEORGE T. COBB, Chairman of the Committee of the Senate; and Hon. DEWITT CLINTON MORRIS, Chairman of the Committee of the Assembly.

The address was delivered on the 12th of February. Hon. James M. Scovel, President of the Senate, presided on the occasion, and introduced Judge Field with a few highly complimentary remarks. Governor Ward, Chancellor Zabriskie, and other prominent citizens of the State, as well as members of the Legislature, were present. At its conclusion, Hon. DeWitt Clinton Morris proposed a vote of thanks, and after some appropriate remarks, expressing on behalf of the Legislature the gratification derived from the able and eloquent address which had been delivered, offered a resolution for its publication, which was unanimously adopted.

ADDRESS.

Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Assembly :

Bear with me while, in obedience to your wishes, I attempt to trace, if with a feeble, yet with a loving hand, the life and character of Abraham Lincoln.

He was born on the 12th of February, 1809, in Hardin county, Kentucky. He was of English descent, and his ancestors came to this country with the followers of William Penn. The house in which he was cradled was a log-cabin of the rudest structure. He owed nothing to birth or fortune. He was born to poverty and toil. His father was an honest man, but he could neither read nor write.

In 1817, when he was eight years old, his father resolved to abandon Kentucky. He was a "poor white," and Kentucky was a slave State; he felt, therefore, it was no place for him. He found his energies repressed by the obstacles which slavery perpetually thrust in his way, and he determined to seek a new home in a free State, where he might hope to rear his sons to usefulness and honor. This circumstance was calculated to make a deep impression upon the youthful mind of Abraham Lincoln, and colored, no doubt, the whole thread of his future life. It accounts for the fact, that although born in a slave State, he always evinced an unconquerable aversion to slavery.

Their new home was found in Spencer county, Indiana, then a wilderness, through the tangled forests of which they were obliged literally to hew their way. They had been

here but two years, when he was called to mourn the loss of his mother. Who would not like to know something of the mother of Abraham Lincoln? She was tall and commanding in person. She had some education, much good sense, and was loved and praised by all who knew her. She was a member of the Baptist Church. "Always speak the truth my son," was one of her daily injunctions. She was accustomed to say, "I would rather Abe would be able to read the Bible than to own a farm, if he can have but one." Another of her household sayings was, when times were hard and days were dark: "It isn't best to borrow too much trouble; we must have faith in God." It is easy to see who moulded the character of Abraham Lincoln. Her death was made happy by the reflection that, chiefly under her own tuition, her favorite son *had* learned to read the Bible.

During the residence of his father in Indiana, he availed himself of such means of education as were within his reach. But they were scanty indeed. One who assisted in his early instruction has recorded his appearance at this time, when he presented himself at the log-cabin school-house, arrayed in buckskin clothes and a raccoonskin cap, and equipped with an old arithmetic; but he tells us at the same time of the diligence and eagerness with which he applied himself to study. To this period of his life belongs an incident which is not without interest, as showing the difficulties which impeded his pursuit of knowledge. He had borrowed of one of his neighbors, Ramsey's *Life of Washington*, and was allowed the privilege of taking it home, that he might read it at his leisure. One night, after he had carefully laid the book away, a storm arose, the rain beat through an opening in the logs, and the precious volume was ruined. What was he to do? He could not replace it. He had no money to pay for it. So he went to the owner of the book, told him of the irreparable injury done to it, and offered, by way of compensation, to work for him until he was satisfied. The offer was

accepted, and the book was paid for by three days' hard labor in "pulling fodder."

Among the books which Mr. Lincoln was in the habit of referring to as having been read by him the most eagerly in early life, were the lives of Washington and Henry Clay, Esop's Fables, and The Pilgrim's Progress. Here we may find the sources from which he derived his political principles, his peculiar and forcible methods of illustration, and that quaintness of phraseology by which his style was always tintured.

When nineteen years of age, we find him making a trip down the Mississippi to New Orleans, on a flatboat—partly with a view to turn an honest penny, and partly that he might see something of the world. In 1830, his father, finding himself encroached upon by the advancing tide of population, resolved to plunge deeper into the wilderness, and to seek another home further west. He removed, therefore, to Macon county, Illinois, where he proceeded to erect a house, and with the assistance of his son, who was now twenty-one, to fence in his new farm. It was here that Mr Lincoln earned for himself the title of rail-splitter, a title given to him by his opponents, when he was a candidate for the Presidency, by way of disparagement, but accepted by his friends, in honorable recognition of the fact, that he was of, and from the people.

In 1831, he made a second trip to New Orleans in the capacity of flat-boatman. In 1832, he commanded a company of volunteers in the Black Hawk war. In 1834 he was chosen a member of the legislature. This was the commencement of his political life. It was about this time, too, that he began the study of the law. He continued to be a member of the Legislature for four successive terms, when finding that politics interfered sadly with his legal studies, he declined a re-nomination, and resolved to devote himself exclusively to the business of his profession. He had been

admitted to the bar in 1836, and in 1837, had established himself at Springfield, which continued to be his future home. It has always been a matter of surprise, that Mr. Lincoln, without any aid from education, should have been able to reason in so close and connected a manner as he was in the habit of doing. A circumstance that now occurred will serve perhaps in some measure to explain this. I will give it in his own words. "In the course of my law reading," he said to a friend "I constantly came upon the word *demonstrate*," and I asked myself, what do I do when I *demonstrate*, more than when I *reason* or *prove*? What is the certainty called demonstration? Having consulted dictionaries and books of reference to little purpose, I said to myself, 'Lincoln, you can never make a lawyer, if you do not understand what demonstrate means.' I never had but six months schooling in my life; but now, I left my place in Springfield, and went home to my father's and staid there, till I could give any proposition of the six books of Euclid at sight."

In 1846, Mr. Lincoln accepted a nomination for Congress, and was elected by a triumphant majority. He was the only Whig representative from Illinois. The great topic of discussion at that time was the war with Mexico. It was afterwards made the subject of a charge against him by Mr. Douglas, that he had distinguished himself in Congress by his opposition to the Mexican war, and by *taking the side of the common enemy against his own country*. But his answer to this charge was undoubtedly the true one. "I was," said he, "an old line Whig, and when the Democratic party tried to get me to vote that the war had been righteously begun by the President, I would not do it. But when they asked for any money, or land warrants, or anything to pay the soldiers, then, during all that time, I gave the same vote that Judge Douglas did." But his Congressional career was certainly not a brilliant one. No one could then have anticipated such a future as that which was in store for him. He was but educating himself for the great task of his life.

The year 1858, was signalized by the great Senatorial contest between Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Douglas. Mr. Douglas' term in the Senate was about to expire, and the Republicans of Illinois had nominated Mr. Lincoln as their candidate to succeed him. Upon the Legislature about to be elected, would devolve the duty of appointing a Senator, and both parties girded themselves for the contest. Mr. Douglas took the field in person. He was unquestionably a most formidable antagonist. Of great personal popularity, he had for many years been the idol of the people of Illinois. He was an accomplished debater, and versed in all the wiles of political strategy. But nothing daunted, Mr. Lincoln challenged him to the combat. He proposed a series of joint debates during the campaign. The challenge was accepted and the terms agreed upon. The meetings were to be seven in number, and were to be held in different quarters of the State. These political tournaments created the most intense interest. Illinois was ablaze with the excitement, and people flocked to the encounter from all parts of the State. Processions and cavalcades, the sound of music and the roar of cannon, contributed to swell the popular enthusiasm. Hosts of followers rallied around their respective champions. Every keen thrust, every skilful blow, every sally of wit, every burst of eloquence, elicited the most tumultuous applause. But we cannot dwell upon the interesting incidents of these intellectual combats. It is enough to say, that if Mr. Douglas anticipated an easy conquest, he was greatly disappointed; for, while he fully sustained his previous reputation, and justified the high estimate which had been formed of his abilities, Mr. Lincoln, by the novelty and freshness of his style, by the pertinence and force of his illustrations, by his inexhaustible humor, and his imperturbable good nature, won the esteem and admiration both of friends and foes. The result of the contest was, that the candidates who were in favor of Mr. Lincoln had a plurality of the popular votes;

but owing to the unfair manner in which the State had been districted, the friends of Mr. Douglas had a small majority in both branches of the Legislature, and he was re-elected to the Senate. Providence had reserved Mr. Lincoln for another and a higher sphere.

As yet, Mr. Lincoln was but little known out of the State of Illinois. But in February, 1860, he made a visit to the city of New York. He was a stranger in the great metropolis; and certainly, neither his appearance nor his manners were calculated to make a very favorable impression. Here he met, for the first time, Mr. Bancroft, the distinguished historian. One, who was present at the scene, thus describes the interview between them. "The contrast in the appearance of the men was most striking—the one courtly and precise in his every word and gesture, with the air of a trans-Atlantic statesman; the other, bluff and awkward, his every utterance an apology for his ignorance of metropolitan manners and customs. 'I am on my way to Massachusetts,' said he to Mr. Bancroft, 'where I have a son at school, who, if report be true, already knows much more than his father.'" How unutterable would have been Mr. Bancroft's astonishment if, at that moment, some good genius, gifted with prophetic spirit, and permitted to lift the curtain of futurity, had addressed him in language like this: "Mr. Bancroft, this man, now standing before you, rude and unpolished though he seem, and of whom you may never have chanced before to have heard, will be the next President of the United States; he will be by far the greatest President that this country has had since the days of Washington; he will conduct the government safely and triumphantly through a war, compared with which all former wars sink into insignificance; he will succeed in crushing a rebellion, the most extensive and formidable that ever before threatened the life of a nation; he will be a chosen instrument in the hands of Providence for extinguishing that system of slavery which

has so long been the reproach of our land; he will, by his proclamation alone, give liberty to four millions of slaves; and when he dies, as die he will by an assassin's hand, he will be lamented as no human being ever was before; not only America, but Europe, the world, will mourn his loss; the anniversary of his birth will forever be one of the great days in our political calendar; and on the 12th of February, 1866 you yourself will be called upon to pronounce his eulogium before the Representatives of the American people in Congress assembled." And yet Mr. Bancroft has lived to see all this accomplished.

But even before Mr. Lincoln left the city of New York, he was to achieve for himself a national reputation. He had been invited, by the Young Men's Republican Club, to deliver an address upon some topic appropriate to the crisis which was seen to be approaching. The address was delivered on the evening of the 27th of February, in Cooper Institute, before a large and fashionable audience. Mr. Douglas had said in one of his recent speeches: "Our fathers, when they framed the government under which we lived, understood this question of slavery just as well, and even better, than we do now." This Mr. Lincoln made the text of his discourse; and in one of the most lucid, logical and compact arguments, that was ever made, proceeded to show what was the understanding of our fathers upon the subject of slavery. It was altogether a most remarkable speech. There was not the slightest attempt at eloquence; there was none even of his accustomed humor; there was not one rhetorical passage. And yet it riveted the attention of a most intelligent and overflowing audience, and excited at times unbounded enthusiasm. It was the eloquence of reason and common sense. Its concluding words were, "Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it." In reply to an invitation given to him about this period, by the Republicans of

Boston, to attend a festival in honor of the anniversary of Jefferson's birth day, occur these striking passages: "Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves; and under a just God cannot long retain it. All honor to Jefferson; to a man who, in the pressure of a struggle for National independence by a single people, had the coolness, firmness and sagacity, to introduce into a merely revolutionary document an abstract truth, applicable to all men and all times, and so to embalm it there, that to-day, and in all coming days, it shall be a rebuke and a stumbling block to the harbingers of re-appearing tyranny and oppression."

But we must hasten to the period when Mr. Lincoln was to enter upon a new and a more trying scene of action than had heretofore awaited him. The Republican National Convention, for the nomination of a candidate for the Presidency, assembled at Chicago on the 16th of May, 1860. The names of several distinguished individuals were presented to the Convention; but from the first, it became manifest, that the contest lay between Mr. Seward and Mr. Lincoln. Mr. Seward's chances were generally thought to be the best. Upon the first ballot, he had 173 votes, to 102 for Mr. Lincoln. But on the third ballot, before the result was declared, the delegations of State after State changed their votes for Mr. Lincoln, until at length it was announced, amid thunders of applause, that Abraham Lincoln had received 354 votes, and was nominated by the Republican party for the office of President of the United States. The nomination was then made unanimous. Mr. Lincoln was at Springfield, in the office of the State Journal, when he received a telegraphic despatch informing him of his nomination. He looked at it in silence, while those around him were rending the air with their shouts; and then putting it into his pocket, quietly said, "There's a little woman down at our house would like to know this—I'll go down and tell her."

The result of the election you know. Mr. Lincoln was

chosen President. He received the electoral votes of all the free States, with the exception of those from New Jersey, which were divided between him and Mr. Douglas. The South had anticipated the result. They were prepared for it. In fact, they had done everything in their power to bring it about. Nowhere did the election of Mr. Lincoln seem to give greater joy and satisfaction than in the city of Charleston. Cheers were given, and congratulations exchanged, at a result deemed so auspicious. They hailed it as the dawn of Southern independence—the consummation of their long deferred hopes. And now began the work of secession. South Carolina, of course, led the way. She had merited that “bad eminence.” Her Convention assembled on the 17th of December, and the ordinance of secession was passed on the 20th. The discussion to which it gave rise is instructive. All disguises were now thrown off and the hideous features of secession, which had been veiled under the specious pretence of a constitutional right, were revealed in all their naked deformity. “The secession of South Carolina,” said Mr. Rhett, “is not an event of a day. It is not anything produced by Mr. Lincoln’s election, or the non-execution of the fugitive slave law. It is a matter which has been gathering head for thirty years. As to the fugitive slave law, I myself doubted its constitutionality, and doubted it on the floor of the Senate, when I was a member of that body.” “I have been engaged in this movement,” said Mr. Keitt, “ever since I entered political life. We have carried the body of this Union to its last resting place, and now we will drop the flag over its grave.” But oh! what a glorious resurrection that body was to have. Georgia, and Mississippi, and Alabama, and Louisiana, and Florida, and Texas, speedily followed in the footsteps of South Carolina. Delegates from these States assembled at Montgomery on the 4th of February, and adopted a pro visiona constitution, under which Jefferson Davis was chosen Presi-

dent, and Alexander H. Stephens, Vice President, of the new Confederacy. Davis, upon his arrival at Montgomery, announced that the South was determined to maintain her position, and "to make all who oppose her smell Southern powder and feel Southern steel." And Stephens, in a speech at Savannah, said that the new government which they had framed was based upon slavery, and, he truly added that it was the first government in the history of the world that was ever built upon such a foundation. "This stone," said he, "which was rejected by the first builders, is become the chief stone of the corner in our new edifice."

While these events were transpiring at the South, Mr. Lincoln was preparing to leave his home at Springfield, to enter upon the duties of his office. He took his departure on the 11th of February. In bidding adieu to his friends and neighbors, there was a sadness and solemnity in his tone which seemed like a presentiment that he might see their faces no more. "A duty," he said, "devolves upon me, which is perhaps greater than that which has devolved upon any other man since the days of Washington. He never would have succeeded, except for the aid of Divine Providence, upon which he at all times relied; I feel that I cannot succeed without the same Divine aid which sustained him, and on the same Almighty Being I place my reliance for support, and I hope you, my friends, will all pray that I may receive that Divine assistance, without which I cannot succeed, but with which success is certain." All along the route, on his journey to Washington, the people assembled in vast multitudes, and without respect to party, greeting him with hearty cheers and good wishes. In the speeches he was called upon to make, he studiously abstained from committing himself as to his future course. His tone, however, was hopeful. "Let us believe," he says, "as some poet has expressed it, that behind the cloud the sun is still shining." But he had no plan for saving the Union. His trust

was in God and the people. "The people," he said at Indianapolis, "when they rise in mass, in behalf of the Union, and the liberties of their country, truly may it be said, 'the gates of hell cannot prevail against them.'" On his entrance into New Jersey, he was received by the Hon. William L. Dayton, on behalf of the State, in a most impressive speech. Mr. Lincoln, in reply, paid a most graceful compliment to this distinguished son of New Jersey—whose name I cannot mention without emotion, and in whose lamented and untimely death, our country has lost one of its very greatest lawyers, statesmen and diplomatists. "You have done me," said Mr. Lincoln to the assembled multitude, "the very high honor, to present your reception courtesies to me through your great man—a man, with whom it is an honor to be associated any where, and in owning whom no State can be poor."

The Legislature were in session when he reached this city, and he was welcomed by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Assembly. Some of you, no doubt, were present, and will never forget the scene which took place in the Assembly Chamber upon that occasion. In the course of his remarks, Mr. Lincoln said, "I shall do all that may be in my power to promote a peaceful settlement of all our difficulties. The man does not live who is more devoted to peace than I am, nor who would do more to preserve it. "But," he added with much emphasis, "it may be necessary to put the foot down firmly." Here the audience broke out into the most tremendous cheers; and Mr. Lincoln, catching the enthusiasm, said, "And if I do my duty, and do right, you will sustain me, will you not?" "Yes, yes, we will, we will," were shouted by every voice. And New Jersey did sustain him, by the alacrity with which she shared the burthens of the war, and by the gallantry of her soldiers in the field.

In Philadelphia, Mr. Lincoln visited the venerable hall

where the Declaration of Independence was adopted. In reply to an address there delivered to him, he spoke of the toils and sufferings which were endured by those who achieved our independence, and said he had often asked himself what great principle or idea it was that sustained them. "It was not," he said, "the mere matter of the separation of the Colonies from the motherland, but that sentiment in the Declaration of Independence which gave liberty, not alone to the people of this country, but I hope to the world for all future time. This is the sentiment embraced in the Declaration of Independence. Now, my friends, can this country be saved upon that basis? If it can, I will consider myself one of the happiest men in the world if I can help to save it. But if this country cannot be saved without giving up that principle, I was about to say, I would rather be assassinated on this spot than surrender it." Noble man! He was assassinated, although not on that spot, just because he would not surrender that very principle. He concluded this remarkable speech in these words; "I have said nothing but what I am willing to live by, and, if it be the pleasure of Almighty God, die by."

He reached Washington on the 23d day of February. All was confusion and dismay. Seven States had passed ordinances of secession, and organized a hostile confederacy. Their Senators and Representatives had resigned their seats in Congress, flinging defiance at the Government, and instead of being arrested on the spot as traitors, were allowed to march out of the Capitol with the triumphal air of conquerors. The forts, the arsenals, the dock yards and the custom houses, within the limits of the seceding States, had been seized by the rebel authorities. Officers of the army and navy from the South, educated at the expense of the Government, had thrown up their commissions and entered the rebel service. During all this time, President Buchanan had looked on with folded arms, declaring that while a State

had no right to secede, Government had no right to prevent secession. He had allowed the public revenue to accumulate in the rebel States. He had allowed cannon and muskets, in immense quantities, to find their way to the South. He had allowed the army to be sent to the frontiers of Texas, and the navy to be scattered in distant seas. Such was the state of affairs when Mr. Lincoln entered upon the duties of his office.

His inaugural address was calm and conciliatory. He declared it to be his purpose to execute the laws in all the States; "but," he added, "In doing this there need be no bloodshed or violence; and there shall be none, unless it is forced upon the national authority." "In your hands," he concluded, "my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The Government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the Government, while I shall have the most solemn one to preserve, protect and defend it. I am loth to close. We are not enemies but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic cord of memory, stretching from every battle-field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

But all such appeals were thrown away, upon those to whom they were addressed. They excited only their derision and contempt. They were interpreted, as all appeals to Southern magnanimity ever were, as signs of weakness. The only response which they made, was the bombardment of Sumter. This was the first act in the bloody drama that now opened. It was a most wanton and unprovoked attack. The feeble and exhausted garrison, under the gallant Anderson, could have held out but a few days longer, and this the

rebels knew full well. But it was necessary that blood should be shed. It was necessary, in order to fire the heart of the South. It did fire the heart of the South. When the news reached Montgomery, the rebel capitol was in a blaze of enthusiasm; and the rebel secretary of war uttered the prediction, that before the first of May, the flag that then flaunted the breeze, would float over the dome of the capitol at Washington, and ere long over Faneuil Hall itself. When the news reached Richmond, Virginia hesitated no longer, but passed at once the ordinance of secession. But this was not the only effect of the bombardment of Fort Sumter. It fired the heart of the North no less. It kindled a flame of patriotism, which all the blood that was shed during the terrible contest was not able to extinguish; and which continued to burn with increasing brightness, until the old flag of the Union once more waved in triumph from the battlements of Sumter.

Whatever hopes the President might have had of a peaceful solution of our troubles were now dissipated. It became manifest to him, as to every one else, that the Union to be preserved, must be fought for. The sword was now drawn, and the scabbard thrown away. He acted with promptness and vigor, and shrunk from no responsibility which the exigency demanded. The day after the surrender of Sumter, he issued his Proclamation, calling out 75,000 men, and convening Congress in extra session. It is impossible to describe the effect produced by this Proclamation. Party lines were everywhere obliterated, and every voice was raised in favor of the government. The North, and the West, responded promptly to the call for troops, and men and money were offered in profusion. Massachusetts, as might have been expected, was the first in the field. The cradle of the Revolution, she rallied round Lincoln as she had rallied round Washington. The day after the issue of the proclamation, her Sixth regiment, completely equipped, left Boston for the

National Capitol. On its way through Baltimore it was attacked by a mob, carrying a secession flag, and several of its members were killed or wounded. But this only inflamed to a higher pitch the enthusiasm which pervaded the country. Baltimore was at that time a rebel stronghold; but she soon came to be one of the most loyal cities in the Union, thanks to the eloquence and patriotism of the gallant Henry Winter Davis, whose recent death a nation deplores.

Congress assembled on the 4th of July. The President, in his message, alluded to the affair of Sumter, to the extraordinary forbearance of the government, and the necessity which had at last been imposed upon it, of repelling force by force. He discussed the pretended right of secession, in all its aspects, with signal ability. He said the contest in which we were engaged was the "people's contest," and he was most happy to believe that the "plain people" understood and appreciated this; that while large numbers of "officers in the army and navy had resigned and proved false to the hand which had pampered them, not one common soldier or common sailor was known to have deserted his flag." That the contest might be rendered short and decisive, he asked Congress to place at his disposal four hundred thousand men, and four hundred millions of dollars. Congress gave him half a million of men, and five hundred millions of money. Oh! could the nature and extent of the struggle then have been foreseen, its frightful cost of treasure and of blood, the heart of the nation would have melted away. But fortunately these things were hidden from our eyes. God had a great work to accomplish, and he inspired both President and people with confidence and hope, a confidence that never faltered, a hope that never failed. The nation was to be redeemed from slavery, and there could be no redemption but by blood.

Upon the history of this great struggle I shall not enter. It is not necessary that I should do so. You know it all.

Fort Donaldson and Vicksburg, Nashville and Atlanta, Missionary Ridge and Lookout Mountain, Antietam and Gettysburg, are still freshly remembered, and the names of Grant and Sherman, of Sheridan and Thomas, of Foot and Faragut, are familiar to you as household words.

Early in the contest, the question of slavery was found to be one of extreme delicacy and difficulty. Congress had at an early day, and with great unanimity, resolved, that the war was waged, not for the purpose of conquest or subjugation, or to interfere with the rights or the institutions of any of the States, but simply for the purpose of preserving the Union and maintaining the supremacy of the Constitution, and that when these objects were accomplished it ought to cease. It soon began to be felt, however, that as slavery was the principal cause of the rebellion, so it had come to be the chief element of its strength. While the slaves were left at home to cultivate the soil, the whole white population of the South capable of bearing arms were summoned to the field. The fact, too, that the Government had disclaimed all interference with slavery, was weakening our cause in the estimation of foreign powers, and seemed to justify the assertion of Earl Russell, in the British House of Lords, that the contest was simply one for independence by the South, and dominion by the North. The President was therefore called upon, by a large and constantly increasing party in the country, to take more decided ground upon the subject of slavery, with a view to the more speedy and effectual crushing of the rebellion. But he long resisted the pressure. He was anxious to propitiate the border States and prevent them from joining the Confederacy, and he wished to silence the clamor of those, who made it a pretext for opposing the war, that the object of the party in power was, not the preservation of the Union, but the destruction of slavery. "My paramount object," he says, in his letter to Horace Greeley, of the 22d of August, 1862, "is to save the Union, and not either to save or to

destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it—if I could save it by freeing all the slaves I would do it—and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others slaves, I would do that also.”

But he soon became satisfied that the time had arrived, when the policy which he had heretofore pursued, could no longer with safety be adhered to. The summer of 1862, was the gloomiest period of the war. General McClellan, at the head of a magnificent army of 160,000 men, after seven days severe fighting, had retreated from the Peninsula, and the capture of Richmond, and the termination of the war, seemed more remote than ever. It was absolutely necessary that something should be done, to rouse the drooping spirits of the country. The President therefore, without consultation with any one, and without the knowledge of his cabinet, resolved upon the adoption of a measure, which he had been long revolving in his own mind. He prepared the original draft of a Proclamamion of Emancipation. It was his own act. He took the whole responsibility of it upon himself. He called a meeting of the Cabinet, not to consult with them as to the propriety of the measure, for this he had resolved upon, but to let them know that he had concluded to take this step, and to submit to them the paper he had drawn up. The only doubt was, as to the expediency of issuing it at that particular juncture. It was suggested, that such was the depression of the public mind under our repeated reverses, that it might be looked upon as the last desperate expedient of a failing cause, and thus add to the despondency which was beginning to prevail. This objection struck the President as a forcible one, and he resolved to wait, until some favorable turn in our affairs took place. It was also objected, that it might have an unfavorable effect upon the elections which were approaching. But this made no impression upon the mind of the President. He was far above all such considerations. Then came the battle of Antietam.

It kindled new hope and joy in the nation; and the President announced to his cabinet, that the Proclamation of Emancipation could be delayed no longer. The people, he said, were prepared for it—public sentiment would sustain it—"and," he added, in a subdued tone of voice, "he had promised his God that he would do it." Upon being afterwards asked by one of his cabinet, whether he had been correctly understood in his last remark, he said, yes, he had made a solemn vow before God, that if General Lee were driven back from Pennsylvania, he would crown the result by the declaration of freedom to the slaves. The Proclamation was issued. It announced, that on the first day of January 1863, all persons held as slaves, in any state then in rebellion against the United States, should be then, thenceforward, and forever free. It was, as he afterwards declared, the central act of his administration, and the great event of the nineteenth century. Its effect upon the fall elections was perhaps disastrous. They went generally against the administration. But this disturbed not the President in the least. It struck a blow, under which, the rebellion reeled, and staggered, and at last fell. It is now known, that it was this Proclamation, and this alone, that averted the danger of Foreign Intervention. Had it been delayed, even a few months longer, England and France would both have acknowledged the Independence of the Confederate States.

In the spring of 1864, began those great movements, that were destined to crush the rebellion and restore the blessings of peace to the land. Grant was appointed Lieutenant General, and invested with the supreme command. On the second of May, the forward movement of the grand army of the Potomac began. The Rapidan was crossed, and thence forward—there were to be no more backward steps. The war was to be fought out on that line. At the same time, Gen. Sherman, at the head of the army of the West, turned his face towards Atlanta, and after the capture of that rebel

stronghold, swept through Georgia and the Carolinas, driving before him the combined armies of the rebels, while Grant held Gen. Lee in a death grasp.

Meanwhile, another Presidential election was approaching. The Republican Convention met at Baltimore on the 8th of June. Mr. Lincoln was nominated by acclamation for President; and for Vice President, the choice fell on Andrew Johnson, of Tennessee, the only representative from the South who, on the floor of the Senate, in 1861, had denounced secession, and dared to call it treason.

General McClellan was the opposing candidate for the Presidency. The Convention that nominated him assembled at Chicago, on the 29th of August. The platform that was adopted, was based upon the idea that the war had proved a failure, and declared, that justice, humanity, liberty, and the public welfare demanded, that immediate efforts should be made for a cessation of hostilities. But the Convention had scarcely adjourned, before news came of the fall of Atlanta, and that Sherman had begun that glorious march, which was to have its consummation in the surrender of the last rebel army.

Mr. Lincoln was re-elected by a majority of over four hundred thousand votes, a larger majority than any other President had ever received. Upon being congratulated on the result, he declared, that while he thanked God for this approval of the people, his gratitude was free from any taint of personal malice—that he impugned the motives of no man opposed to him—that it was no pleasure to him to triumph over any one—that he had never willingly planted a thorn in any man's bosom, and that it added nothing to his satisfaction that any other man might be disappointed by the result. And in his second inaugural address, occurs this memorable passage: "Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet if God wills that it continue, until all the wealth

piled by the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, that the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. With malice towards none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphans, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations."

Richmond was evacuated on the 2d of April. On the 3d, the President, who had been with the army for several days, made his entrance into the rebel capital. His coming was unannounced. He had not even a military guard. Instead of being mounted on a triumphal car, with his train swelled by captives taken in war, after the manner of a Roman conqueror, he came on foot, and unattended, save by those he had made free. As he walked along the streets, leading his little son by the hand, the poor blacks flocked around him, wild with joy, clapping their hands, throwing up their hats, waving their handkerchiefs, shouting and dancing with delight. "God bless you President Linkum," "May de good Lord bless you President Linkum," "I thank you, dear Jesus, that I behold President Linkum," were heard on every side. They had been looking for him. He was their Moses, nay, their second Messiah. They had watched for his coming with longing eyes. They had said he would come. They had prayed that he would come. And he had come at last, and with their own eyes they were permitted to look upon the face of their deliverer.

Lee surrendered on Sunday, the 9th of April. The war was now virtually at an end, and peace once more with healing on her wings was to visit our torn and bleeding land.

On Tuesday evening, Washington was in a state of joyous excitement. Flags were waving, and fires blazing on every side. The Executive Mansion was illuminated in honor of the occasion, and to an immense crowd there assembled, the President delivered his last public address. In view of the discussions now taking place in Congress, there is one passage in this address, full of interest, and fraught with instruction. He alluded to a letter in which regret was expressed, that he had not made up his mind definitely upon the question whether the seceded States were in the Union or out of it. He said it was not a practical question—it was “a merely pernicious abstraction,” and that the discussion of it “could have no other effect than the mischievous one of dividing our friends.” “We all agree,” he says, “that the seceded States, so called, are out of their proper practical relation with the Union, and that the sole object of the Government, civil and military, in regard to those States, is to again get them into their proper practical relation.” This is worth whole volumes of eloquent and abstract discussions. Friday, the 14th of April, was the anniversary of the surrender of Fort Sumter, and the Government had resolved, that on that day the American flag should be raised upon the fort, with ceremonies befitting the occasion. Mr. Lincoln’s heart was overflowing with the patriotic joy which such a circumstance was calculated to inspire. On the morning of that day, a Cabinet meeting was held, enlivened by the presence of Gen. Grant. Never before had the President been so cheerful and hopeful. After the meeting was over, he talked to his wife, with all the warmth of his loving nature, of the four years of darkness and storm through which he had passed, and of the bright sun and clear sky which now shone upon him. He then made arrangements for attending the theatre in the evening. He told Mr. Colfax, that he would be glad to stay at home, but the people had expected both General Grant and himself, and as General Grant had been obliged to leave town, he did not like to disappoint them altogether.

A little after eight he went to the theatre, accompanied by his wife and some friends. At a quarter past ten, while all were intent on the proceedings upon the stage, an assassin, with a pistol in one hand and a dagger in the other, entered the box in which the President was sitting, and holding the pistol just over the back of his chair, shot him through the head. He then rushed to the front of the box and leaped upon the stage below, and shouted as he went, Virginia's ancient motto, "*sic semper tyrannis.*" His spur was caught in the flag which draped the front of the box, and he fell; but he rose at once, faced the audience, brandished his dagger in the air, cried out "the South is avenged," and then rushed across the stage to a door in the rear and made his escape. But his leg was fractured by the fall, and thus his detection was owing to the fact that his feet had been caught in the folds of the flag. That flag has ever been a stumbling block in the traitor's path.

But the assassin had done his murderous work. Mr. Lincoln lingered until a little past seven on the following morning, when his gentle spirit took its flight. He died without a pang. He had been unconscious from the first. Language would fail me, were I to attempt to describe the shock produced by the tragic event, coupled as it was, with a murderous attack upon the Secretary of State, which it was thought would prove fatal. It was so unlooked for, so sudden, so awful. It was, as if some great convulsion of nature had taken place—as if some star had shot madly from its sphere—some comet had swept across the path of our globe—some earthquake had opened to swallow us up—as if the angel of death, in visible form, had been seen flying over the land. Never before, was a whole nation, in such a moment, cast down, from the highest pinnacle of joy, to the lowest depth of grief. One long, loud, universal wail of woe, was heard throughout the land, and echoed from beyond the sea. And then, that funeral procession, stretching for more than fifteen

hundred miles, and witnessed by more than five millions of human beings, never before had the world beheld so solemn a spectacle. Other nations have mourned the death of their sovereigns or their benefactors, with all the outward habiliments of sorrow, but never before was grief so sincere, so deep, so pervading. It seemed as if every man had lost a father or a friend—as if every household had been robbed of some loved inmate, and every hearth-stone been made desolate. And as for that race whom he had made free, who can tell the anguish that wrung their hearts, when the sad news came to them in their lowly cabins, that their father, their deliverer, their saviour was no more.

But there was one consolation left. His work was done. His task was finished. He had lived to see the last stronghold of rebellion surrendered, its last battle fought. He had lived to see slavery perish, and the Union saved. It was right that he should now go to his reward; and that after so many toils, and griefs, and burdens, and anxieties, he should have a heavenly rest. He seemed to have had a presentiment that he would not outlive the rebellion. "When it is over," he said more than once, "My work is done. I never shall live out the four years of my term." And as early as 1859, he seemed to have felt that his struggle with slavery was a death struggle and might cost him his life. "Broken by it," said he, "I too may be; bow to it, I never will. The probability that we may fail in the struggle ought not to deter us from the support of a cause which I deem to be just; it shall not deter me. If ever I feel the soul within me elevate and expand to those dimensions, not wholly unworthy of its Almighty architect, it is when I contemplate the cause of my country, deserted by all the world besides, and I standing up boldly and alone, and hurling defiance at her victorious oppressors. Here, without contemplating consequences, before High Heaven and in the face of the world, I swear eternal fidelity to the just cause, as I deem it, of the land of my life, my liberty and my love."

And now, having reviewed the principal events of the life of our late President, let us endeavor to make some estimate of his character, intellectually and morally. Abraham Lincoln was undoubtedly an extraordinary man. Called to preside over the destinies of a great nation, at a most critical and perilous period, he seemed at first view, to be destitute of almost every quality requisite for the crisis. He was not a soldier, and had no knowledge of military affairs. He had no experience as a statesman or diplomatist. In early life he had been a rail-splitter, a flat-boatman, and a back-woodsman. And his maturer years had been spent in the seclusion of a country village. He had none of that boldness and energy of character, which are thought to fit men for times of civil convulsion. He was not what the world would have called a scholar, or a gentlemen. He had had little or no education, and his manners were singularly ungraceful. His friends trembled, lest he might prove himself unequal to the occasion; while to his enemies, he was only an object of derision. And yet, his administration was the most successful and the most glorious that this country has ever seen; and he will go down to posterity as the greatest of our Presidents.

"No hero, this, of Roman mould;
Nor like our stately sires of old;
Perhaps he was not Great,
But he preserved the State;
Ay! And his genius put to scorn,
The proudest in the purple born;
Whose wisdom never grew,
To what, untaught, he knew."

No doubt he was ably seconded in the cabinet and in the field. But then he chose his counsellors and his commanders; and here he displayed the greatest judgment and sagacity. Never before were the three great department, of the State, the War, and the Treasury, so ably filled. Mr. Seward, by the admirable skill with which he conducted our foreign negotiations, never betraying the honor or the dignity of the

nation, and yet ever mindful of the motto of his beloved chief, "one war at a time," has laid the country under obligations to him which can never be repaid. Mr. Stanton is now universally acknowledged to have been the greatest war minister that this, or indeed any country ever had ; while the magnitude and extent of his herculean labors are just beginning to be understood and appreciated. And Mr. Chase, while he sustained the credit of the Government under the frightful expenditures of the war, and enabled it to borrow every dollar that it needed without asking aid from abroad, had the genius to conceive, and the boldness to execute, a grand system of National Banks, which put it in the power of Congress to perform, for the first time since the adoption of the Constitution, what Mr. Webster always insisted was one of their most important functions—that of providing for the people of the United States a sound and uniform currency.

All honor, then, to these men and their colleagues in office, who so nobly sustained the Government ! But who enabled them to retain their seats in the Cabinet ? Who does not remember the incessant clamor with which both friends and foes assailed almost every head of department, and the importunity with which the President was called upon to appoint others in their stead ? But invoking the aid of one of his homely maxims, he firmly resisted all such attempts. He knew their worth, their capacity, their fidelity ; he had confidence in them, and every one now sees he was right.

Nor let it be said, that it was the superior numbers and resources of the North alone, that enabled the President to put down the rebellion. On the one side, were eight millions of people, united as one man for all practical purposes, scattered over thousands of miles of contiguous territory, and holding in their hands the mouths of that great river which waters the vast basin of the Mississippi. They were not a race accustomed to subjection, whose spirit had been broken, and whose strength had been subdued by years of oppression.

On the contrary, they were a proud and high spirited race ; quite equal in point of courage, and superior in military tastes and habits to those against whom they were arrayed. They were better prepared, too, for the contest. Their armies were composed of the flower of Southern chivalry, under skilful and accomplished officers ; and they were fighting on their own soil. Such a people would seem to have been invincible by any force that could be brought against them ; and the idea that there was a possibility of their being conquered never once entered into their minds. On the other hand, the North, while having a larger population, was very far from being united. From the first, there was a large and powerful party opposed to the President, opposed to the Government ; some of whom were in open sympathy with the South—denouncing the war, and counselling submission to all the demands of the rebels ; and others, who, while professing to support the Government, were doing everything in their power to thwart its measures, and embarrass its operations. I say not this to impugn the motives of any man or any party, much less to re-kindle passions, which I trust are buried in the grave of our martyred President, but to state truly the facts of history. In such a contest, too, it is generally the first blow that tells ; and the rebels won the first great victory. And for long, our armies, though brave, were undisciplined, and were led by Generals, half-hearted and inefficient.

That such a rebellion should, under such circumstances, have been put down, is truly wonderful. It could not have been put down by any Government in Europe. It could not have been put down by any Government in the world, except such a Government as ours ; and I verily believe it never could have been put down by our Government, if it had not had at its head such a man as Abraham Lincoln. Whatever may have been our first impressions, we now see that the qualities which he possessed were the very qualities

needed for the occasion. What were thought to be his weaknesses were the very elements of his strength. Had he been an ambitious man—an energetic man—a man of showy and brilliant parts—the people never would have trusted him with those large and arbitrary powers, the exercise of which were absolutely necessary in order to save the State. But that Abraham Lincoln could ever be guilty of abusing those powers, or of using them for any selfish ends or purposes, was a thought which never once entered into their imagination. And therefore, when popular orators and newspaper presses inveighed against arbitrary arrests, and the suspension of the *habeas corpus*, they made not the slightest impression upon the public mind. The people knew in whom they trusted; and that Abraham Lincoln would ever deprive a man of his liberty unless the public good required it—that he would ever plant a thorn unnecessarily in any man's breast, they never would believe. This was the great secret of his strength. He was one of the people. He was in sympathy with them. He laid his large heart alongside that of the people, and every pulsation of the one found a responsive thrill in the other.

Nor was it to the people of this country alone that he was so endeared. While the ruling classes in England affected to despise him, and could see nothing to love or to admire in him, the hearts of the common people turned instinctively towards him. Not only those by whom our language is spoken, but the people of France, of Italy and of Germany, seemed to be drawn to Abraham Lincoln by some "mystic chord" of sympathy. Everywhere throughout Europe, there was a spell and a fascination in his name. The interesting fact has just been announced in a French provincial newspaper, that the workingmen's subscription of one *sou* each to strike a medal commemorative of their abhorrence of the murder of Mr. Lincoln, has reached the sum of five thousand francs, and that the medal will be shortly transmitted to the

American Government. And the weavers of Lyons have lately completed a magnificent flag, finished in the very highest style of their art, designed as a memorial of President Lincoln. The inscription is worked in gold thread, and it is embroidered with thirty-five silver stars, emblematical of the thirty-five States of the Union. It is to be sent up for exhibition in Paris, and then to be forwarded to the United States. There have been some touching exhibitions in Italy, too, of the love and veneration everywhere felt for him.

Abraham Lincoln was a great man. Not great in the sense in which that term is commonly used, but in a far higher and nobler sense. His greatness was not of the antique mould. It was not of the Grecian or the Roman type. Nor was it of the European order of greatness. It was not the greatness of a Pitt, or a Wellington, or a Napoleon. It was something eminently American—peculiarly indigenous—the legitimate growth of our own christian civilization, our own free institutions. He had none of the attributes which are usually ascribed to popular heroes, whether of history or romance. His qualities were rather christian graces and virtues. They were the very qualities upon which benedictions are pronounced in the sermon on the Mount. He was meek—he was merciful—he was pure in heart—he was a peace maker—he loved his enemies—he blessed them that cursed him—he did good to them who hated him—he prayed for them who despitefully used him and persecuted him. And it is to the honor of our country, and the glory of our institutions, that such qualities fitted him in an eminent degree, to be the ruler of a free people. He was such a hero as Moses was; and like him, he led his people through the red sea and the wilderness. He brought them within sight of the promised land, and then on Pisgah's top he died. In one respect, he was greater than Moses; for he brought out of the house of bondage, not his own brethren and kinsfolk, but those of another family, and another race.

That Mr. Lincoln did not at first fully comprehend the nature of the contest in which we were engaged, is admitted. There were few of our public men who did. In the speeches which he made on his way to Washington, he frequently made use of the expression, "Nobody hurt as yet." In his first inaugural, he seemed to be under the impression, that if the South could only be persuaded that there was no intention on his part to interfere with slavery in the States, they would gladly return to their allegiance. He was slow to believe, that the destruction of slavery was necessary to the preservation of the Union. Nor did he for some time fully realize, that there was involved in the contest, something more than slavery, something more even than the Union itself; that the cause in which we were engaged, was the cause of truth, and justice, and law, and order, and civilization, and christianity, throughout the world, in a word the cause of free institutions, here and everywhere, now and in all time to come. But when this was at last fully revealed to him, it is interesting to see how he rose and expanded under its influence. It swelled his soul, and dilated all his faculties. From this time, the war became to him a holy war; and he felt more and more assured, that we had God on our side, and therefore could not fail. So fully had this idea taken possession of his mind, that had he been a man of more ardent temperament, he might have become an enthusiast, and almost fancied himself inspired. But in truth, no one was ever less of an enthusiast than he was.

His intellectual qualities were of a very high order. There may be those who would object to so unqualified a statement. And yet I believe it to be correct. He owed nothing to education. He was emphatically a self-made man. Said one who knew him well, "he read less, and thought more, than any man of his standing in America, if not in the world." But this only shews the strength of his native powers. He had, as we have seen, an eminently logical mind. No man

was ever more capable of pursuing a close and consecutive train of reasoning. He was a remorseless analyser of facts and principles. He delighted to reduce them to their simplest elements, and to bring them down to the level of the humblest capacity. Even when a boy, he used to be irritated when anybody talked to him in a way that he could not understand. "I don't think," he said, "I ever got irritated at anything else in my life; but that always disturbed my temper, and has ever since." This simplifying of thought was a perfect passion with him. "I was never easy," he said, "until I had a thought bounded on the North, and bounded on the South, and bounded on the East, and bounded on the West."

He possessed originality and power of thought in an eminent degree. He had a retentive memory, and he had stored his mind with the most beautiful passages from his favorite books, the Bible and Shakspeare. He certainly did not cultivate the graces of style, and he was usually inattentive to the harmony of his periods. And yet there are to be found, scattered through his writings and speeches, passages of exquisite beauty—literary gems—which shine and sparkle the more highly by reason of the plain settings in which they are encased. Many of these I have already given, and others will readily occur to those who are familiar with his productions. Thus, in his Springfield letter, written in 1863, he says, "The signs look better. The Father of Waters again goes unvexed to the sea. Peace does not appear so distant as it did. I hope it will come soon, and come to stay; and so come as to be worth the keeping in all future time. It will then have been proved that, among freemen, there can be no successful appeal from the ballot to the bullet. And there will be some black men who can remember that, with silent tongue, and clenched teeth, and steady eye, and well poised bayonet, they have helped mankind on to this great consummation, while, I fear, there will be some white ones unable

to forget that, with malignant heart and evil speech, they have striven to hinder it."

So too, was anything ever more beautiful, more graceful, more felicitous, than his address at Gettysburg. "We have come to dedicate a portion of this field as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that the nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do so. But in a larger sense, *we* cannot dedicate, *we* cannot consecrate, *we* cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here have consecrated it, far above our power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we *say* here, but it will never forget what they *did* here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here, to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced." There was nothing finer in Mr. Everett's address upon that occasion.

It was a peculiarity of Mr. Lincoln's mind, that he never could speak well unless he had something to say. To some men this does not seem to make much difference. Hence, he was seldom happy in his *impromptu* addresses, in his complimentary speeches, in returning thanks, or in his remarks on some sudden occasion. He always felt and often alluded to his embarrassment at such times. He wanted a theme, a subject—some proposition to discuss—some data upon which to reason—some premises from which a conclusion was to be drawn. Then he was always himself. This was probably owing to the fact, that he was not a man of quick perceptions. The operations of his mind were slow. He wanted time to reach his conclusions. He "bounded" his thoughts—he weighed his words—he made his approaches at a distance, cautiously and deliberately; but when his conclusions were reached, he was as certain of them as he was of any demonstration of Euclid.

But it was the moral qualities of Mr. Lincoln that were the most attractive. He was pre-eminently a good man.

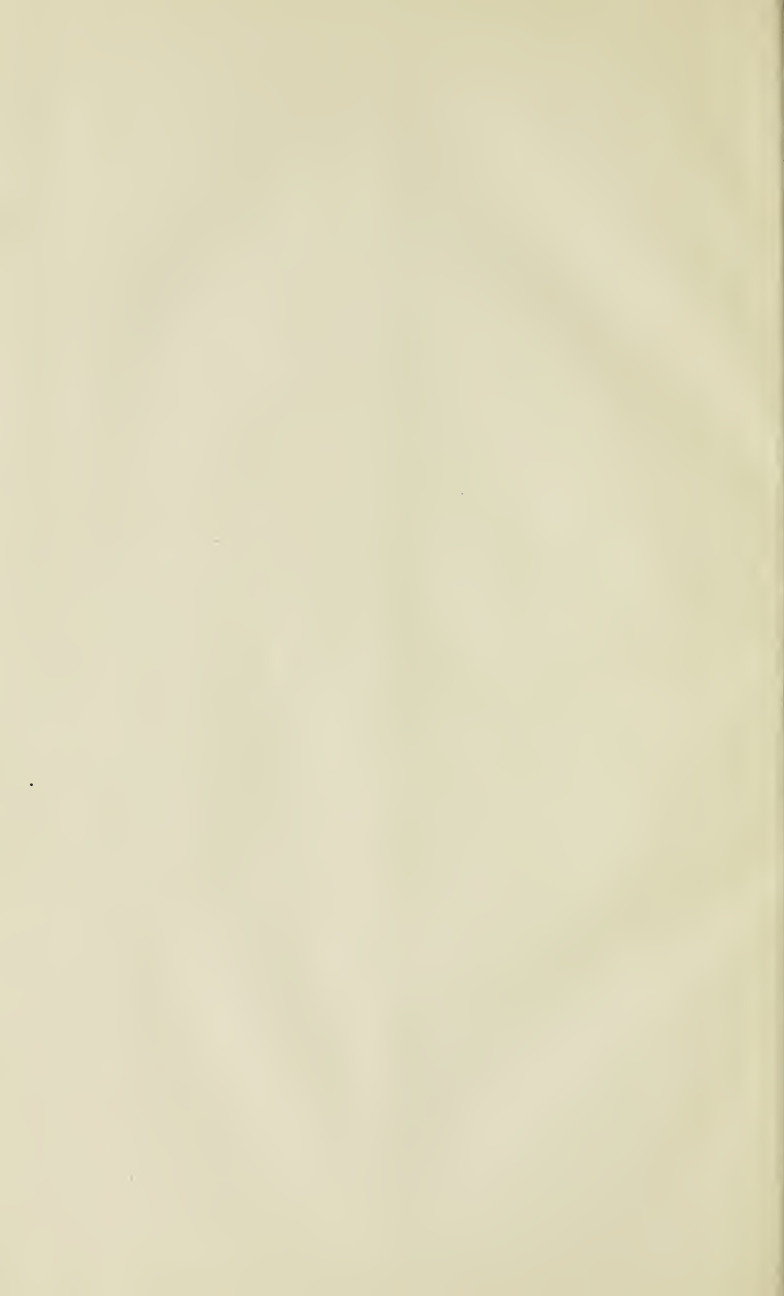
And, if love to God, and love to man, constitute the essence of Christianity, then was he a christian indeed. The current of his humanity was broad, deep, and full. Boundless as the ocean, it washed every shore, and circled the whole earth. No one ever felt more keenly another's woe. He bore the burdens of others, and shared their sorrows. His joy for every victory won was clouded, and his grief for every disaster incurred was embittered by the thought, that so many brave men had laid down their lives, and so many families had been left desolate. "I cannot bear it," he would exclaim, when news were brought of the dreadful loss of life in the battles of the Wilderness.

And if he had love for man, he was no less distinguished by his trust in God. No one ever cultivated habitually a deeper sense of his own helplessness, and his entire dependence upon God. This was manifest, not only in his public addresses and proclamations, but it ran through the whole current of his life and conversation. He was averse to forms and ceremonies of every kind. He did nothing for effect. He was wholly free from ostentation. He did not love to pray standing in the corners of the street, that he might be seen of men. He had none of that dogmatic spirit, which will tolerate no differences of opinion, in reference to matters about which we see but darkly, and know only in part; but of that charity, which suffereth long and is kind, which envieth not, which vaunteth not itself, which is not easily provoked—who among the sons of men ever had a larger measure? Who can read that beautiful picture of the last judgment, which, as it seems to me, teaches and touches more than any other in the New Testament. "When saw we thee an hungered and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger and took thee in? or naked and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say: Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least

of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me"—who, I say, can ever read that beautiful passage without thinking of Abraham Lincoln.

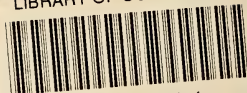
A Plutarch would delight to run a parallel between Washington and Lincoln. There are certainly strong points of resemblance between them. They were alike in their prudence and their patience, in their strong common sense and their sound practical judgment. In their disinterestedness, their entire unselfishness, the breadth of their patriotism—which soared above all party views—and the depth of their devotion to their country, which made them ready at any time to die in her service, they were strikingly alike. They both lived in revolutionary times. Both conducted their country safely through a long and bloody war. And both were for a second term elected President of the United States. They were neither of them men of brilliant talents, and had not a particle of what is usually called genius, and yet both accomplished, what no talents, however brilliant, and no genius, however splendid would, in the absence of their other qualities, ever have enabled them to perform. But in other respects, there were strong points of contrast between them. Washington was born to wealth, Lincoln to poverty; Washington was of patrician blood, Lincoln was, in every sense of the word, a plebeian; Washington belonged to the aristocracy of the South, Lincoln to the democracy; Washington was a man of great elegance of manners and dignity of deportment; his very presence inspired awe; Lincoln was singularly ungraceful in his manners, awkward in his address, and unimposing in his appearance; he was utterly destitute of what is usually called dignity, although no doubt he possessed true dignity of soul. If, in one respect, this gives Washington the advantage, yet in another, it enhances our estimation of Lincoln, that he had that within him which enabled him to overcome these deficiencies. In their intellectual qualities, Lincoln was undoubtedly the superior; for

while in sagacity and common sense he was quite equal to Washington, in his powers of reasoning and analysis he was much greater. But there can be no rivalry between them. If Washington was the Father of his Country, Lincoln was its Saviour. If Washington was the builder of the temple of our liberties, Lincoln was the restorer; and the glory of the second temple is greater than that of the first. They were kindred spirits. They were both stars of the first magnitude in our political firmament, before which all others pale their ineffectual fires. They will both shine with equal brightness upon the page of history, and hand to hand, linked together, they will go down to the remotest posterity. And when, in all time to come, throughout the world, oppressed nations struggle to throw off the yoke of tyranny, and to lift themselves from beneath the burdens under which they have been long groaning, they will kindle their enthusiasm, and nerve themselves for the contest, by the watchwords of Washington and Lincoln.





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